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WILLARD E. HAWKINS, *Editor*

EDWIN HUNT HOOVER

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL
Associates

DAVID RAFFELock

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THE FURTHER LIMITATION thrown around the production of motion pictures by the edict of Will H. Hays, prohibiting scenes or titles that may be construed as ridiculing the Eighteenth Amendment, or any other law, must now be carried in mind by authors who write with one or both eyes on the screening of their stories.

If Mr. Hays's position has been made clear, the intent of the restriction is to forestall any criticism that the films encourage law-breaking, or are being used to instill propaganda against the enforcement of unpopular laws. The producers themselves are back of the edict, which it is hoped will make the lawmakers feel that national censorship is unnecessary.

It is understood that if an historical play is produced in which serving liquor is a necessary feature of the story, no objection will be made. "My quarrel," Mr. Hays is quoted as saying, "is not so much with the natural serving of liquor as with

scenes that encourage the breaking of this law in a spirit of levity or in showing ways and means of evading its intent."

Which, it may be seen, is a statement possible of wide interpretation. It seems definitely to put the ban on stories dealing in any way with bootleggers. This may or may not be a loss to the public; but since bootlegging and other lines of lawbreaking constitute definite problems of modern life, it is difficult to see how the author who seeks to portray life realistically can get very far on the present-day screen.

But perhaps the public actually prefers pap to realism. Eric Von Stroheim, author and director, remembered for "The Merry Widow," "Foolish Wives," "Greed," and other photodramas, has adopted this view. He is quoted as saying:

"The public absolutely refuses to accept realism. If people will not look upon life as it is, we must give them a gilded version. * * * Our films are

made for children. Sex must be entirely eliminated. The love scenes must be as free from ardor as if they were played by juveniles instead of adults. I shall do as the majority wish—choke them with final embraces underneath the apple trees, so they will not deplore my wicked soul and my innate vulgarity."

WHILE WE ARE CONSIDERING the subject of what may be printed or produced and what may not, it is interesting to quote Editor V. V. McNitt of *McNaught's Monthly*. Bearded by a prospective reader over the advisability of a twelve-year-old daughter's reading *McNaught's*, he replied: "If magazines and reviews are permitted to publish only those things that may be considered suitable for the eyes of twelve-year-old girls, what is to be the future of adult intelligence in this country? What chance have we for intellectual freedom and progress? One trouble with America is that far too many persons are trying to regulate and standardize everything to fit the twelve-year-old mind." He adds, in a published comment: "It has been our observation that the wholesome, clean-minded young people have grown up in homes where intellectual honesty and simple acceptance of facts have been the rule, rather than repression and suppression."

He quotes the editor of the *London Spectator*, replying to critics who decried the publication of an article about Parisian actresses appearing practically unclad in some performances: "It may be asked whether a paper which is suitable for men and women is also invariably suitable for the schoolboy and schoolgirl. . . In our judgment the change during the past generation from comparative secrecy to comparative frankness in the presence of facts has been a good one. A false and harmful modesty, something which was mistaken for modesty, but was not modesty, has been steadily passing away. . . It is a mistake, we are sure, for the adult to read into the mind of the child his own thoughts. The truth is that if you are frank and never seem to be hiding away secret things, the child is deprived of the great incentive of unsatisfied curiosity. This is the principal source of trouble."

ANOTHER INDICATION of how meticulously accurate in details of setting, customs, foreign locale, etc., authors must be, lies in *The Danger Trail's* recent introduction of Douglas M. Dold, its blind editor:

"Mr. Dold is a soldier of fortune, adventurer, scientist, surgeon, authority on wild animals and reptiles, deep-sea fisherman, hunter, trapper and sportsman generally. He lost his sight in 1915 while serving with the Serbians (carried on a stretcher in terrible agony to surrender Nish, which he commanded after the Serbian retreat, to the Germans under Mackensen). Since then, he has kept up his studies by being read to, still goes

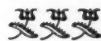
fishing on the Atlantic coast and walks about New York City with complete indifference, many times coming near to accidental death, being pushed in front of a subway train, etc.

"At an early age he started on his adventurous career, going to the Gold Coast of Africa and many isolated parts where he studied languages and customs of the natives. He knows South America and particularly the Amazon River. Revolutions are particularly well known to him, being a soldier of fortune. He has sailed the South Seas and been washed off a whaleboat in midocean, been clawed by wild animals, collected snakes and reptiles, served as curator of the Bronx zoo, where he handled the poisonous snakes, is a recognized authority on the little-known sections of the world, knows Tibet, China, Australia, Siberia, Central Europe and the countries around Turkey and farther East, is a writer on fishing and hunting, won a minor amateur tennis tournament, is a long-distance swimmer and hiker, was an excellent boxer and fencer, formerly lectured on anatomy and biology and is an omnivorous reader and writer of stories laid in faraway parts of the globe."

NO CHANGE AS YET, apparently, in the situation as regards the sale of original scenarios to the motion-picture producers. In fact, the closed market seems to be more tightly closed than ever. Writing for Motion Picture Universal Service, a syndicated column, Louella O. Parsons observes:

"Fully 200 letters came to my desk this week asking me where the sender could place his story and be assured of a reading and a prompt decision. I am forced to come back with the sad news at this present moment that there is no place for original scenarios from unknown authors. Unfair, you say! Possibly, but wait until you hear the side of the producers who have been forced within the past year to fight suits on plagiarism brought by unknown writers claiming pet situations have been stolen. The majority of producers, in view of these suits, have decided to return unopened all original scenarios."

She cites as having issued such orders to their scenario departments, Joseph Schenck, president of United Artists; Cecil De Mille; Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Company; Charles Furthman, head of the scenario department of Famous Players-Lasky Company, and First National Pictures. The only exception is the Universal Company. Edward Montaigne, head of the scenario department, is quoted as saying: "Carl Laemmle encourages the sending of original scenarios, and he has instructed his force to give them every consideration." In case of Universal, Mr. Montaigne was quoted as explaining that for its two-reel pictures the company could not afford to pay the big sums demanded by well-known authors and playwrights, and so was forced to look elsewhere for ideas, paying from \$250 to \$500 for those accepted.



Signposts for Authors

BY ARTHUR E. SCOTT

Editor of Top-Notch Magazine



ARTHUR E. SCOTT

ONE of the few things that have remained in my memory from schoolboy days is the opening line of Caesar's "De Bello Gallico," which says that "All Gaul is divided into three parts." Why this particular line should have impressed itself upon me, I do not know, but at the moment it strikes

me that authors may be divided into a similar number of classes. From schoolboy days, too, I remember an old preacher who would mount the pulpit on Sundays and inform the congregation that at first sight his text might be resolved into a certain number of divisions, and then he would proceed with an elaborate explanation which had been carefully thought out in his study, but which was not apparent to his listeners, at least not at first sight, and perhaps not at all. My division of authors, however, is simple and needs no great explanation.

The three classes are: First, those who sell all or much the greater part of their work; second, those who sell some, but by no means all; and third, those whose sales are a negligible quantity, perhaps one or two stories. To the first class I have nothing whatever to say in this article; they have

proved their ability and need no advice from me or anyone else. To the third class I do not think I have anything to say here, as they belong strictly to the amateur class, and therefore require more elementary aid.

It is to the great second class that I propose to devote this article, those who are trying to live by writing fiction, but who get a considerable number of their stories turned down. These are not amateurs; they are giving their whole time, or the greater part of it, to creative literary work and are living on the proceeds. And there is nothing they desire more than that they should be graduated into the first class I have named, when their sales would approximate one hundred per cent of their output.

How can this be done? If I could give an answer to this question that would fit the case of every partially successful writer I would be accomplishing a miracle, for the shortcomings of writers are numerous and varied, as varied, perhaps, as the requirements of the publications for which they write. The best I can do is to point out from my own twelve years' experience the reasons why so many manuscripts are found wanting, and while some of these reasons apply in more or less degree to *Top-Notch Magazine*, I feel that most of them will be found of general application.

LET us take the first case. An author sells a story and follows that one up with another which he sells to the same magazine. Naturally, he considers that he has "arrived." Several additional sales confirm this impression, and after that he be-

gins to get polite letters of regret that "this story is not available for our use."

I recall an actual case of this kind, and the author wrote to me to know the reason why his sales had stopped. I looked into the matter and found that all his earlier sales had been of a particular type of story of which we were always in great need, and in which field there was practically no competition; the stories that were rejected were of a general type of Western adventure, in which field the writer was coming in competition with a large number of skilled authors. An editor of one of the most widely circulated publications in the United States said at a writers' meeting that the way for an author to get into his magazine was for him to write something that no one else was doing.

There is no doubt that writers are too much inclined to read a magazine and send in fiction to it along exactly similar lines. It is all right for authors to study a magazine—editors generally wish they would all do so—but the result of that study should be a knowledge of the type of stories used, indicating the policy of the magazine, and the authors' efforts should be directed toward submitting stories that are to some extent different, while not conflicting with the general trend of the publication.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. Anyone who had read *Top-Notch Magazine* recently—up to the time this is written—and then submitted stories just like those I have been using, has a chance of selling one if it is good enough, but he is coming in competition with many writers who have proved their worth. On the other hand, if his study of *Top-Notch* made him consider the various kinds of stories that have *not* been there, and that might reasonably be there without conflicting with the policy of the magazine, he would have struck a brilliant, though not an original, idea. Has any author noticed that I publish very few stories of the railroads? The reason is that they seem almost impossible to get. Many men know all about railroads, but few there are who know railroads and who can write entertaining fiction about them.

HERE, then, is perhaps one answer to the question. You get your stories back because you are writing the sort of

material with which the editor is flooded. You should strike out along a line of your own. Get something that is distinctively yours and stick to it. I am writing now, of course, with regard to magazines like *Top-Notch*, which publish general fiction, but I think the same thing may apply in some degree to the class magazines. If the magazine publishes only detective stories, devise a special kind of these stories for yourself. If the stories must be Western, apply yourself to some part of the West, or treat your stories in a manner that is different from the usual way.

I do not think there are many—if any—editors who are so tied and bound that they will not welcome something that is varied in its theme from the general run of the material they get. Do not be afraid to take a chance. A couple of years ago Nell Martin sent me a brilliant bit of comedy about a dumb-bell stenographer, although up to that time I do not think we had ever published any story in which a woman was the principal character. This story, however, was far too clever for me to let it get away, and I bought it and published it.

Since then thirteen others of the same type have followed it, making fourteen in all, and the end is not yet, I hope. The dumb-bell stenographer has been featured on the screen under the title, "The Adventures of Maisie," and all this was the result of Nell Martin's taking a lucky chance. I may add that I have had quantities of letters from men who told me they do not like women's stuff as a rule, but they do love Maisie.

If any other author can think up a series as entertaining and clever as this one, I wish he—or she—would send it along. Don't say to yourself that *Top-Notch* wouldn't buy that; it's not in their line. But remember that men heroes are preferred, and to get a woman hero across with us she must be something quite out of the ordinary.

The next point I would bring up is one of vital importance—the necessity of clearness. The old Bible text has been paraphrased for authors as follows: "And now abideth faith, hope, and clarity, and the greatest of these is clarity." This may be said without any irreverence, and perhaps this way of stating it may impress upon writers the necessity of being clear. One of

my associates who read a great many manuscripts for me used to say when he handed me one which met with his approval: "That's a good story; it's so clear." You see how it impressed him with the fact that he did not have to stop now and then to puzzle out what the writer meant.

Frequently in reading manuscripts I have to go through many pages wondering whether the story is laid in New York, Hongkong, or the South Sea Islands, when the point could, and should, be made clear at the start.

THE matter of clearness is, as I have said, of vital importance. Readers take up stories for their entertainment, not to puzzle over them to find out what the writer meant. If a story is good, but needs clearing up, I return it to the author, telling him where the story is deficient. But I should not have to do this, and I am sure that there are a great many editors who will not do it. There is really no reason why they should. If you do not take the trouble to make your stories perfectly clear, there are plenty of other authors who do, and so you get your manuscripts back.

I have often questioned old professional writers about certain points in their stories and have received a satisfactory explanation, and then I have pointed out that the explanation given to me was not in the story at all; it was in the author's head, but he had forgotten to write it down.

I have been writing about clearness of thought and in the development of the story, but there is another clearness that cannot be emphasized too strongly—clearness of the manuscript. In any story the object to be attained is the illusion of reality—a point upon which I shall touch later—and a story is good or bad just in so far as it attains this, or fails to do so. How can an editor feel any of this illusion if he has to stop now and then to try to decipher the manuscript? If he can read on, swiftly and without pause, he may get it, if it is there. But even if it is there, and if he has to puzzle over messy typewriting and corrections made in illegible handwriting, he is pretty certain not to get it at all.

This seems such an elementary matter that I would not mention it only that I find so many writers err in this respect. I have seen manuscripts that it would take a con-

jurer to make out, and these were not written by greenhorns by any means. A clean, well-prepared manuscript will not cause a story to be bought, but it will at least enable the editor to judge the story fairly. This is a point worth remembering. I might add that although I have no interest in the typewriter-supply business, the occasional purchase of a new ribbon is a worth-while investment.

Let us now consider another reason why so many manuscripts are returned. I think the subject matter is frequently the cause of a great many rejections. There are certain topics that many magazine editors will not handle, some because the topics are not considered suitable for popular magazine fiction, and some because they have been long worn out and are now quite threadbare. If you are in doubt about the subject of a story you propose to write, drop a letter to the editor of the magazine to which you intend to submit your story and ask his opinion. If you don't believe him when he says the subject is not a good one, try another editor. If they agree, it might be advisable for you to get another topic to write about.

The author should use plain common sense in this selection of what he is to write; controversial subjects in general should be avoided; no editor can afford to please half of his readers at the cost of alienating the other half. Stories of smuggling, moonshining, bootlegging, and hijacking have been much overdone and, so far as I am concerned, are not acceptable. In sport stories, the kidnapped star player, the chap with the yellow streak, and the girl who will marry the man who wins the game, come under the same heading, and such tales invariably draw rejection slips.

Another reason why many stories are returned is that the manner of their presentation is undesirable. The long-drawn-out introduction is perhaps the most frequent. In a novel I have cut out the whole of the first chapter, which was wholly unnecessary to the story. In short stories I often throw away the first page. The author sometimes indicates the possibility of doing this by stating at the top of the second page, or perhaps later, "Now let us start the story." Why did not he begin at the beginning himself?

I wonder if authors as a class are in the

habit of going to church and hearing sermons. If the preacher starts off in a dull, uninteresting manner, decency compels his audience to sit still and hear him to the end. That's where the preacher has the advantage over the author. If a magazine reader finds the opening of a story stupid, he is under no compulsion to go on reading it; he passes it up and turns to the next story. If writers would only realize this I am sure it would result in their doing better work.

STORIES told in the first person are to many editors unwelcome. I do not think any editor would lay down a rule that he would not buy one of these; sometimes a first-person tale is so well done that he simply must have it. Speaking generally, however, a writer is handicapping himself by adopting this method of presentation.

There is good reason for this. If the hero is the one who tells the tale, the story has an air of braggadocio; if it is an onlooker who does the talking, then he is unnecessary. Writers have often flung back at me when I have mentioned this: "What about Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes?" My answer to that is that anyone who can write a story as well as Conan Doyle may do it any way he pleases, but that the Sherlock Holmes stories would have made just as big a hit if they had been told in the third person.

Another unwelcome method of presentation is the story within a story. A group of men get together and, after some desultory talk, which is of no particular interest to any one, somebody makes a remark which starts one of the group off on the story.

This is objectionable for two principal reasons. It makes a dull opening—and no other reason is really necessary—and it lacks the force of a tale told first-hand by the author. If a man enters your house and tells you about a terrible accident he has just witnessed in the street, naturally it seems more vivid to you than if he told you Jones had seen the accident and written to him about it. The telling may be just as graphic in the one case as in the other, but "I saw this" is very much more forcible than "I heard today." In a story the author is telling you what he knows; this force is weakened when he makes it appear that he has to drag someone else in to tell the tale, even though it is really as much his

own story as if he started to tell it himself.

I could go on giving an endless number of reasons why so many authors get their manuscripts back, but I think I have stated a sufficient number to cause some thought on the subject which may reveal to writers their own failings. I have but one more point to make, and before I pass on to that I wish to mention a couple of minor matters. Don't call your hero Bill or Dick or Tom, unless you are writing for a juvenile publication. Let his friends call him by his first name. And don't use simplified spelling. It is not in general use, and you have no right to expect an editor to correct your spelling if he buys your story.

THE final point upon which I wish to touch is the most important one of all; it is the reason why stories are returned which do not fail in any of the respects I have mentioned, or any of a multitude of others to which I might have referred.

When you are writing a story you are writing it for the entertainment of readers. In order to entertain them you are presenting a picture of something that is supposed to have happened. The entertainment will be real or the reverse just in the proportion that you make the picture seem to be an actual happening. The perfect story has the illusion of reality. That is why you laugh at one story, cry at another, and feel a creepy sensation at a third. For the moment the story is actually happening before your eyes. And yet authors all the time inject matter into their work that simply kills this illusion by reminding the reader every now and then that after all this is only a story.

In order to obtain this effect of illusion, you must make your story real; your characters must act like real people, talk like real people, have motives like real people. In too many stories the characters might fittingly be described as an array of puppets going through a prescribed course of action in a dumb show. But who wants to read such stories? A story must be alive, its characters pulsing with life and swept by the feelings and emotions that characterize human beings; not like a lot of marionettes pulled by a string when the author wants them to do their bit.

This, after all, is the greatest thing in story-writing. If you can achieve this effect, it will atone for any number of short-

comings in other respects. When your manuscripts come back, examine them with this in mind. See if you think you have presented a real, living picture to the reader. Does it stand out as an actual happening before him? Or have you injected yourself into the tale now and then to remind the reader that this is only a story? Are your characters real people or mere dummies? One of the best proofs of the worth of a story is when the editor gets letters asking for more stories of the particular hero the author has described. You see this indicates that the author has drawn a faithful picture of a real man in whom the reader has become interested and therefore desires to hear further details about him. Dummy

characters will never produce such requests.

AS I said at the beginning, I do not claim to speak for any one but myself and the magazine of which I am editor, but I know a good many editors, and I think I am sufficiently acquainted with their ideas to feel that with most of what I have written they will have no quarrel. I have tried to point out general faults, and the most common reasons why manuscripts are returned, and I hope that these remarks of mine may be of some little use in aiding the partially successful writers to take a step forward into the No. 1 class, when rejection slips and polite letters of non-acceptance will be things relegated to the limbo of the past.



That Description

By CLEMENTS RIPLEY

*Smells are surer than sounds or sights
To make your heart-strings crack—*

RUDYARD KIPLING.

WHEN I was an undergraduate at college (and that wasn't so long ago either) I wrote a description of a cathedral. I told how the dim light filtered through the high, stained-glass windows. I spoke of the lofty, vaulted ceiling. And I made very free with such words as "vast" and "immense" and "towering."

To tell the truth, I thought it was pretty darn good, and I took it to my instructor and waited modestly for him to be overwhelmed. He read it and handed it back.

"The First Baptist Church, on State Street, has high, stained-glass windows," he remarked.

Manifestly this was unfair. "But——" I began.

"It also has a lofty, vaulted ceiling," he went on.

"But the size," I protested, and I pointed to a "towering" or two.

"It towers," he said, and it seemed to me he said it a little wearily. "Go look at the

garage next to it and the houses on the other side."

So I took my manuscript and set to work again. I shut my eyes and concentrated until I could see every detail of that cathedral. I went over it, bit by bit, and to save my life I couldn't see what was wrong. Finally I took out a little of the vastness (that remark about the garage had got under my skin) and I put in the tinkle of the altar bell and the rise and fall of the chant, and I took it back again.

"Now that's better," my instructor admitted, "but it isn't a cathedral yet."

I went home and sat down in front of my typewriter, and there I sweated large, red gouty drops of blood. I saw that cathedral. I saw the dim arches, and the rose window, and slender candles with their motionless flames. I heard the bells and the slow swing of the chanting and the soft click and shuffle of feet on the worn pavement. And then I caught the faint, pungent tang of incense—and I put it in.

I should like to be able to relate that this time the instructor fell on my neck and wept, but, perhaps fortunately for me, he

wasn't that kind of an instructor. He did, however, give me an "A," which was equivalent to tearing the heart out of his breast.

Sometime I shall do that cathedral again, but this time I hope that I shall not only see it and hear it and smell it, but feel it and taste it as well, for it seems to me that that is how description should be written.

IF you doubt it, next time you read a bit that picks you up out of your armchair and sets you down half a world away, go over it again and see if I'm not right. There is no rule in writing that cannot be violated on occasion, but it is ten to one that you will find that the writer hasn't relied on your eye alone to make his effect. Probably he has appealed to at least three of your senses, and quite possibly to the other two as well.

Take this as an illustration:

"In a turquoise twilight, crisp and chill,
A *kafila* camped at the foot of the hill,
Then the blue smoke haze of the cooking rose,
And tent-peg answered to hammer-nose;
And the picketed ponies, shag and wild,
Strained at the ropes as the feed was piled;
And the bubbling camels beside the load
Sprawled for a furlong adown the road.
And the Persian pussy-cats, brought for sale,
Spat at the dogs from the camel bale;
And tribesmen bellowed to hasten the food;

And campfires twinkled by Fort Jumrood;
And there fled on the wings of the gathering dusk

A savour of camels and carpets and musk,
A murmur of voices, a reek of smoke,
To tell us the trade of the Khyber woke."

NOW that is good description. You may not have known what a *kafila* was, you may be hazy on the definition of it even now, but you everlastingly know what it's like. You see it, and you hear it, and you smell it. You feel the chill of that turquoise twilight, and you taste the savour of musk. And that's what Kipling meant you to do when he wrote it.

That sort of thing isn't accidental. In the space of sixteen lines he has appealed to all five of your senses. He knows, few better, that he has five approaches to your mind, and he uses them all. Smells have a particularly potent appeal because they are less obvious than sights or sounds. Count the number of them in your favorite piece of description. I have an idea you will be surprised.

Just for fun, take that last one of yours whose rejection "did not imply lack of literary merit" and see whether the street scene in Cairo is really Cairo or Main Street the day of the Shriners' parade. Maybe it'll go better if you get a smell in.



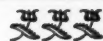
Milk and Cream

By HAROLD MYNNING

A MANUSCRIPT fresh from the typewriter is like a quart of milk fresh from the bottling machine. Let the milk stand a while and the cream rises to the top. In the same way, let the author take three thousand words from the typewriter and forget about them for a day or so. On the morrow, condense the material to one thousand words and you have cream instead of milk. Or, if you prefer triple-cream, you might reduce the manuscript to five hundred words.

Some writers edit as they go along, as they say. That is, they don't put in useless words and consequently don't have to remove them. Excellent if you can do it. George Randolph Chester was of the opinion that it was largely a matter of habit. Choose your own course.

To change the figure of speech: Brevity is a flower blooming in the garden of intensity.



Meeting the Editors in Person

BY ALBERT WILLIAM STONE



ALBERT WILLIAM STONE

I HAVE been selling fiction, more or less steadily, for more than eight years. In that time I have disposed of approximately three hundred short stories, to twenty-three magazines, twenty of them of the class known as "popular." Eighteen of these magazines are

published in New York.

For the last two years I have been making my living at writing fiction. In other words, there are those who would credit me with having "arrived" (although I haven't, really), because I seem to have reached the stage where I can live and support my family upon what editors pay me for the stories I write. Virtually my entire income is represented in what the postman brings me.

Up to a month or so ago I had never seen a magazine editor—with two exceptions. As both of these gentlemen edit publications to which I have never sold anything, they don't count in this confession. What I mean to say is, I had never seen any of the editors who had been buying my work; and yet my sales have been mounting with satisfactory rapidity.

Occasionally I have met brother writers, usually fellows much farther up the ladder than I, who assured me that I ought to go to New York and meet the editors in person.

"You'll gain by it," they declared. "Personal contact; that's the thing. Meet 'em face to face. Nothing like personal meet-

ings to cement friendships. It's true in all other lines of activity, isn't it? Well, then!"

Frankly, the advantages of meeting the editors in person had always been rather vague to me. Don't they invariably declare that "the story's the thing?" Of what avail is personal contact, then? An author can't sell a yarn to a hard-boiled editor by virtue of his persuasive ability. The story must measure up to that editor's standard.

Nevertheless, I felt that it would be pleasant to meet some of the gentlemen anyway. I was curious, for one thing, to see what they looked like. There was Frank E. Blackwell, editor-in-chief of *Detective Stories*, *Western Story* and *True Western Stories*. For years he had been writing me kindly letters and sending me checks. Miss Alice Strobe, his efficient associate editor—what of her? She often bought, and she frequently rejected. Her letters were cordial and filled with wise counsel. And there was Mr. Kelly, of Fiction House, Inc., publishers of *Action Stories*, *The Lariat*, *Northwest Stories*, etc.; a gentleman who can say more in less space than any other editorial writer I have ever dealt with, by the way. To say nothing of Mr. Martinsen, the "authors' contact" man of the Fiction House staff; of Harry E. Maule, the chief mogul of the Doubleday-Page magazines, *Short Stories*, *Frontier* and *West*; of A. H. Bittner, Ralph Perry, Anthony Rudd and others on the Doubleday-Page staff; of Harold Hersey, of the Clayton publications—*Ace-High*, *Cowboy Stories*, etc.; of the never-to-be-forgotten "Bob" Davis, of the *Munsey* staff; of Matthew White, Jr., and Mr. Titherington, of *Argosy All-Story* and *Munsey*, respectively; of Robert Simpson, of the *Mystery Magazine*; and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Would it pay me to make the long jour-

ney to New York to meet these gentlemen? And, if so, how?

"Do it," other writers counseled me. "You won't regret it."

WELL, I went. I remained long enough to have interviews with thirteen editors in the flesh. I did it all in five days, with Sunday intervening. And at this writing, safely back in Denver and once more pegging away at the typewriter, I can honestly and sincerely declare that, in my case at least, meeting the editors has been a profitable, as well as a rarely pleasant, experience.

In the present article there will be space only to summarize some of the benefits received. These benefits are found in the answers to certain questions which writers are constantly propounding. Perhaps I had better set these questions down as I go along, answer them from my individual experience and illustrate my answers with recitals of things told me by editors during our interviews. Here they are:

QUESTION: Can a writer learn more specifically what editors want in the way of stories, from personal contact?

ANSWER: Decidedly, yes. One editor spent an hour and a half outlining the kind of stories he desired, illustrating his talk with examples taken from experience. When he had finished, I had definitely relegated to the scrap heap several fundamental errors I had been making for years. Incidentally, this editor has rejected only one yarn from my pen since, and that one he stated was simply not the kind he was using. He turned it over to another magazine for further consideration. At this writing I have not heard from the second editor.

Q. Should writers read and study the magazines they are aiming at, before they prepare their stories?

A. Usually, they should. I found but one editor who advised otherwise. All the others stressed, with emphasis, the necessity for this precaution. One editor went so far as to declare that the average author would increase his sales to a point close to one hundred per cent, by first studying the magazines aimed at. Another declared that more than half the failures on the part of authors to sell their work could be traced to this lack of "sales sense," as he expressed it.

Q. Do editors like personal letters with manuscripts submitted?

A. Some of them do, some of them don't. One editor assured me that he likes them, and would rather have a personal letter with a story than not. Another, on the other hand, declared with considerable warmth that he "never reads 'em." A third said that they do no harm, provided they are short and have some point to them. A fourth asserted that such letters do no harm, but, conversely, neither do they do any good. My conclusion, therefore, is that some editors really like personal letters, provided they are not fulsome or obviously designed to aid in selling the story, and that others pay little or no attention to them. It seems to be up to the writer to exercise selectivity with reference to the particular editor with whom he may be dealing, and gauge his letter-writing activities accordingly.

Q. Do editors like to receive personal calls from authors?

A. I should say that they do, provided the author is one with whom they have been corresponding and of whom they have been buying some manuscript. Some so-called authors are pests, of course. They will waste valuable time if permitted to do so. Against this kind the editors have erected a protective shield. But the author who calls purely on business, states his business clearly and concisely and departs as soon as the business is finished, is always welcome. Editors recognize that a part of their duties is to meet writers in person. The out-of-town author who calls is sure of an audience, at least if the editor has been doing business with him or has evinced an interest in his work.

Q. Are editors willing to help authors with suggestions?

A. They are, invariably. In fact, they welcome the opportunity to do so. A writer who shows talent and adaptability is always considered a "find." I cannot stress this too strongly. A "find" is to an editor what a "strike" is to the sportsman on a fishing trip. He takes personal and professional pride in developing the new writer, and in exhibiting the writer's name in his table of contents. Of course, the writer must show something besides talent merely. He must be turning out work showing considerable promise, and especially the promise of eventually rounding it into the particular form and shape

required by the magazine of which the editor in question is the editorial head.

Q. Is there really a wide demand for popular fiction among New York editors, or is the supply so great that the new writer is seriously handicapped in his efforts to break in?

A. I found that the competition between rival magazines in New York is incredibly keen. Some of the editors admit it frankly. The reason is obvious. Where a few years ago there were only one or two so-called "popular" magazines, today there are scores. One publishing house alone issues eleven different magazines, several of them coming out weekly and others twice a month. One company pays out, for magazine material alone, about \$100,000 a month. Another's annual expenditures in this connection approximate \$750,000 a year. The competition between editors for material, therefore, was never so keen as now. They literally pounce upon a promising new author. This is not an exaggeration; it is a cold, business fact, and is recognized as such in New York. However, the new writer must produce the goods to sell, even to this teeming market. He cannot dispose of shoddy. The rivalry between editors is based upon the necessity of finding material meeting the more or less exacting requirements of their readers. They will not buy anything that happens to be offered, simply because the authors declare it to be fiction. "Produce the goods," and you will be astonished and gratified to find that the sale of your work is merely a matter of intelligent submission.

Q. What is the condition of the so-called higher class fiction magazine market? Does it pay a writer to try for it?

A. I was informed by one editor who seemed to know, that writing for the "high-brow" fiction magazines is a precarious undertaking for the average author. Even the well-known names, he asserted, would have a struggle if they depended upon that class of market alone. But most of them do not. Many of them write also for the all-fiction market under *nom de plumes*; and in the majority of cases they make more income from the all-fiction market than from the higher class magazines. The latter give them valuable advertising, perhaps; but as the higher class magazine market is neces-

sarily limited, as compared to that represented by the all-fiction magazines, many wise writers turn out reams of action fiction at lower rates, to augment their incomes. I was surprised to learn that some of the best known names appearing in the tables of contents of such all-fiction magazines as *Argosy All-Story*, *Western Story*, *Detective Stories*, *Adventure*, *Short Stories*, *Frontier*, etc., are really *nom de plumes* of writers who may be found in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Red Book*, *Pictorial Review*, *Collier's*, etc. Thus, you see, the all-fiction market is not to be despised. It constitutes the financial backing of many a famous author.

Q. Is a literary agent of value to an author?

A. This depends upon the author, and upon the agent. There are good and bad agents. There are agents who will handle only the work of dependable, prolific, high-grade writers, and cannot be induced to deal with any other kind. There are agents, also, who will handle anything that is fiction, depending upon volume for their profit. There are discriminating agents, and there are non-discriminating agents. And, of course, there are unscrupulous, dishonest agents, who merely prey upon inexperienced writers.

I learned in New York that certain agents have no standing whatever with editors, and that others stand so high that a mere statement from them that they have a good story, adaptable to the magazine in question, means a sale. On the whole, I should say that writers should market their own work until they discover one of the dependable agents.

Q. What rates may a writer look forward to getting, if he continues to progress in his profession, from the all-fiction market especially?

A. The new writer may reasonably expect one cent a word from the average all-fiction magazine, to start with. Some pay less, and a few pay more. An advance to a cent and a half may be sought and received after selling to such magazines for, say, a year—provided the sales have been of reasonable frequency. Two cents will be paid by most of the all-fictions at the end of two years or more; but at this point the limit has been reached in the majority of cases, I believe. Most editors with whom I talked

spoke of two cents a word as their limit, although admitting that in exceptional cases they would pay more. A few of the editors pay up to three and a half cents, usually to older and more dependable writers, and a very few up to five cents.

Q. Is it dangerous to success to turn out work too rapidly?

A. I was surprised to find that the average all-fiction magazine editor cares nothing whatever for the speed with which a writer turns out work, provided it reaches the standard of quality he demands. Personally, I have written two short stories, of five thousand words each, in a single week, submitted them both in the same envelope to an editor, and received his check for the pair by return mail. This same editor assured me that if I could turn out three or four reasonably good short-stories a week, he would buy them all without delay, and would be "mighty glad to get them." Some writers turn out fiction so rapidly that it is necessary to run their stories under several different names, perhaps two or more in one issue. Editors often issue entire numbers of their magazines with only four or five contributors represented in the pages, although a dozen or more names may appear. Some authors are so prolific that, were their stories to appear with their real names over them all the time, readers would become satiated. In other words, there is a "saturation point" in the personal publicity accruing to writers through the use of their own names over their yarns, and the editors avoid reaching that point by the substitution of *nom de plumes*.

It is doubtless true that too-rapid effort on the part of the average author means corresponding lowering of quality; but editors of the all-fiction magazines appear to pay little attention to this danger. What they are interested in is getting fiction of the class demanded by their readers and the policy of their magazines; they care nothing for the rapidity with which work is turned out and received.

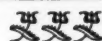
Q. Is it a good plan to keep a manuscript in the mails until all possibility of sale is exhausted?

A. Yes, and no. Editors admitted to me that evidence of long travel, appearing in the form of old creases, finger marks, wrinkled paper, and so on, prejudices them in spite of themselves. One editor expressed astonishment when I told him I had sold him stories previously rejected by another editor. He indicated that he might not have purchased the stories had he known of this. However, many stories are purchased after repeated submissions; the safe plan is to rewrite the first and last pages of the manuscript each time it is returned, and other pages if they seem to require such treatment. After the seventh or eighth rejection, I should say, an entire revamping might be profitable; it usually is.

THE foregoing is largely a series of impressions I received as a result of my interviews. In subsequent articles I shall go more into detail, repeating conversations I had with certain editors. The business advantage of such personal contacts is invaluable, I believe. In one instance I sold a series of stories at double the rate the magazine had previously been paying me; in another I was assured that if I would send a volume of salable material, I would receive better rates than I had been getting, with prospects of still better to come in the future. A few editors were kind enough to ask me to write something for them before I left New York. I was too busy, however, to do so.

Yes, it paid me, in dollars and cents, to go to New York. In one sale alone, of a story written since my return, I received forty-eight dollars more than I would have received had I not seen the editor in person; in fact, I probably would not have made the sale at all, since it was at his suggestion that I wrote the yarn along lines agreed upon between us. He knew what he wanted, and told me. I wrote what he wanted, and received a generous check for it.

In conclusion, I would say that if you have sold one or more editors at least five stories each, you can scarcely lose anything by going to New York and meeting the gentlemen—or ladies—in person.



Pray on Publication

BY THOMAS THURSDAY



THOMAS THURSDAY

WHICH reminds me, Mr. Hawkins, and fellow hack-smiths, of the story about a certain hard-baked publisher — stop me, folks, if you've heard this — and the wise little author. Once upon a time there was a publisher named Tryan Getit, who was so tight that he was obliged to use a monkey - wrench

to turn himself around a corner. Came the time when he died, and his body was placed in a funeral parlor for burial. As Mr. Getit was just as popular as the works of Upton Sinclair in the homes of Mr. Morgan and Mons. Rockefeller, the services were not well attended. Just a few strangers, who perhaps did not care for the Western movie being shown next door, chanced to stroll in out of curiosity.

"And now, dear friends," concluded the automatic funeral director, "is there not some friend of this dear, departed publisher present who will rise and pay a last, brief tribute to his memory?"

There was a long, strained silence, as Dr. Frank Ward O'Malley would say, among the sprinkling of strangers in the back pews. The silence was growing painful, when up bounded a high-browed young man, who wore a bit of typewriter ribbon for a tie and a return-envelope for a cap. Dynamically, he strode up beside the remains of Mr. Tryan Getit, and faced the small audience.

"Good people," he boomed, tossing his cap to the floor, "I don't mind saying a few kind words about this publisher, but before I do, I want to be certain of one thing: *Did he pay on acceptance or did the suckers have to wait until publication?*"

Before me is a letter from the editor of the—let us say—*Bricklayers' and Artists' Home Pal*. Step up, folks, and have a look!

Dear Mr. Thursday:

Re your story—"The Scotchman Didn't See the Game—the Fence Was a Bit Too High."

This story isn't half bad and we think we shall use it in a future issue of our periodical.

Sincerely,

COLE YOUNGER, *Editor*.

That letter wasn't half bad, either; but after examining the envelope more thoroughly, I gathered the notion that a very important part was missing. So I wrote back:

Dear Mr. Younger:

Thanks awfully for your very good letter of the 15th. I am happy, indeed, to find you liked my story, and trust that it will please your readers. However, I regret to inform you that the check covering payment must have slipped out of the envelope. Trusting you will be gracious enough to look into the matter at your convenience, I am,

Cordially yours,

T. T.

Instead of receiving the check by return mail, I was dazed to get this:

Dear Mr. Thursday:

In reply to your recent communication, we wish to inform you that it is the policy of our magazine to pay contributors on publication.

Sincerely,

COLE YOUNGER, *Editor*.

After digesting that bit of wit and humor, I snatched a sheet of asbestos paper, and fired back this:

Dear Mr. Younger:

Your simp-smacking letter received. Since your policy is pay-on-publication, I herewith ask you to place my name on your books for a five-year subscription to your periodical. A few months after the five years expire, I shall pay you for everything. Meantime, I would esteem it a favor if you would please return my story—if you have not already stolen the return postage.

Thanks for listening.

Cordially,

T. T.

This letter got results. Promptly—two months later—my story was returned, postage due.

WHEN I do not feel like annoying myself by writing a short story, or, to be more explicit, whenever I note that there are no plots hanging around worth stealing, I usually dash off an article. Last fall, having motored down to fevered Florida to observe the alligators eating oranges, I wrote a five-thousand-word article on the joys of motor-camping and touring. My sole reason for making it five thousand words was because it should have been written in two. I submitted this outrage against good literature to a magazine—well, suppose we call it *Gas, Oil and Touring*. (The veil is very thin—but this particular publisher's attitude is so flagrantly rotten, I should give the real title.) A gentleman named John D. Short was the editor of this publication, and a very important lad he is. His letters have all the snap and humor of the complete works of Holy Moses and Emanuel Swedenborg.

A month passed and I received no word from my wandering boy. So I dropped Mr. Short a short note. My notes, short or long, are not representative of the highest form of tact and culture. Here's the note:

Dear Shorty:

When do we eat?

Respectfully,

T. T.

This brought an immediate reply—three weeks later.

Dear Sir:

Answering your letter of the 26th of June, would say that we are not privy to your query.

JOHN D. SHORT, Editor.

Believing that further letter-writing on my side would not make a single dent in a head that shape, I grabbed my hat and tax-

ied down to the office of *Gas, Oil and Touring*. I found that the company published several other magazines, and that personally-calling writers were as welcome in their midst as arsenic in a king's soup. Tossing a few over-snappy office boys through convenient windows, I hopped over the brass rail, and raced down the corridor until I came to the coop that housed my good friend, Dr. John D. Short. Before he had a chance to ask how I happened to be in his crib, I came to the point at once.

"Ah, yes; to be suah," he drawled. "Well, we'll look up your article in due course. Eh—thanks for calling."

A suave lad, what? The average author, who is a highly sensitized and timid creature, would have probably bowed, mumbled something that sounded like "thanks," and departed. Personally, I am not of that type, as some editors have suspected long ago. You see, a number of years of trouping with carnivals, circuses and what not, have left me pretty well boiled. Add to that the fact that I was at one time a "pugeyist" of the middleweight division—one who was always willing to meet the floor halfway—and you will understand why no drawing-room could possibly be enhanced by my presence.

"Just a minute, Doc," I said. "Before I dodge out this door I crave to know whether or not you pay now or when the roses bloom again."

"You shouldn't worry about payment, young man," he retorted. "You are to be congratulated that we have accepted your article."

"That answer, Doc, smells like a codfish ball after reclining for two weeks in the Florida sunshine. What I want to know is this: Do you pay promptly for accepted material or do you look upon contributors as saps?"

"We pay on publication," he snapped. "which is a good policy."

"For the publisher," I added.

"Really, I have no time to debate the question," he said.

"Let's have my script," I shot back.

"Eh—we'll return it by mail."

Observing a large alphabetical file at the left, I promptly walked over and opened the drawer marked "T." Whilst the jovial editor sat and glared his very worst, I

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plowed through the file until I had found my script.

"What do you mean?" he snapped.

"Business," I returned, and dashed out of the door.

BUT really, folks, I shouldn't be incensed at these P. O. P. birds. They don't owe me a single dime—though it was through no fault of theirs. It is true, of course, that if Jesse James and Captain Kidd were alive today they would very likely be engaged editing magazines with a pay-on-pub. policy. And if such a policy is fair and square, then I maintain that it's a damn shame that such gentle folks as bandits, pickpockets and bootleggers should be imprisoned for their crimes.

The pay-on-publication trap would be sprung for all time if the writer—especially the aspiring ones—would refuse to be a party to such a sappy arrangement. But you know how it is—little Willie Woofgus has written a mess entitled "What I Think of the Grand Canyon," and since Willie

does not know what anything is all about—mostly writing—he shoots his gem in to a P. O. P. drum, and since there are any number of Willies, there must always be any number of such drums. A matter of vanity—Willie wants to see his name in print—tra-la—and then he can show it to Ma, and Ma can show it to the neighbors. All of which gets Willie a large slice of *hanswurst*.

IN conclusion, I wish to offer a perfect solution to the pay-on-publication nuisance. I have made no attempt to patent or copy-right the idea, and all those who desire to use it are welcome to do so; in fact, I would be glad if they did. Here's the system:

To every writer who is satisfied with the pay-on-publication arrangement, give a nice, shiny automatic pistol. After equipping each writer with said pistol, have him go out and kill either a pay-on-publication editor, or better still, a publisher. And then—well, *then* hang the writer for murder.

Good hunting!



Salvaging Rejections

By JERRY BEEBE

"INSURANCE companies are now considering issuing unemployment policies, and it will be only a short time before writers can cash in on their rejection slips." This was the gist of an interview given out recently by Lansdowne V. Hassendiffel, the foremost unsuccessful author of the day.

Mr. Hassendiffel is the recognized authority on the rejection slip, having amassed the largest collection in existence. Like all men who have accomplished big things, he is very methodical about his work, leaving his home at 8:13 every morning for his office, where his staff of clerks operate a battery of the latest filing devices for handling his constantly growing accumulation.

"I am at present engaged," said Mr. Hassendiffel, "in writing an article on the various kinds of rejection slip, which I confidently expect to be turned down by every magazine of importance in this country and Great Britain. The tyro knows, of course, only a few of the simpler forms, not realizing the infinite series of gradations which actually exist.

"In my files you will find all the printed forms—the terse, the gently verbose, the not-at-present-suited-to-our-needs, the overstocked-at-this-time, and even some freak specimens of humorous rejection, with phonetically spelled words and jocose apologies for the failure to accept.

"But it is in the field of the personal note from the editor that the finest shades of distinction are seen. The news that your story, though not accepted, shows promise, and will you try them again?—what a thrill of conquest that brings! Damped, to be sure, by the later comment that the next story is very disappointing and not at all the thing; but that is compensated for by the letter from a lady editor, saying that she tried and tried to find space for your villanelle, but all in vain, and much to her regret she is returning your charming little jingle. That is a greater triumph than any prosaic slip of paper with figures scrawled on it. One learns, after long practice, to distinguish clearly between the rejection of a story because of weak plot and the far more creditable refusal of one because it is not in line with the policy of the magazine. Only when one collects written rejections such as these and learns to appreciate their subtle nuances can one consider one's self a true connoisseur.

"My only fear is that if some insurance scheme does become effective, enabling writers to collect a percentage on rejection slips, we shall lose some of our foremost dilettantes. In speeding up their output they may actually turn out some marketable stuff and ruin their standing by making a sale."



Unity

BY WILLARD E. HAWKINS

(This series began in the October, 1925, issue.)

UNITY is an artificial quality, yet justly indispensable to the artist. Many a piece of literature fails because its strength is diffused.

Fiction is organized life. It is organized for a direct attack on the mind of the reader. A strong story owes much of its appeal to the fact that extraneous matters are eliminated; developments are held in leash until the climax moment, then allowed to take the reader by assault. The author who tells his story without regard for unity may be likened to a general who sends a few men at a time against the enemy. Each little assault is easily repelled. It makes no impression on the opposing force, and by the time the general has exhausted his material he has nothing to show for it.

The skilful author-general holds back his forces until he can take the reader by surprise. Suddenly he releases his whole army in one grand charge, which sweeps everything before it.

Think of your story as contained in the climax. Husband every resource for the final massed attack on the reader's defenses.

Frequent causes of diffused interest are:

First, the title. Sometimes a title will contain such a bald statement of what the story is about that the reader loses interest before he begins. Example: "Jimmy Captures a Burglar." Why should we read further, when the title has told us what happened? The careful author tantalizes the reader by keeping him "guessing." One means of doing this is a curiosity-arousing, non-revealing title. The one above mentioned might be phrased, "Jimmy and the Burglar," which at least has the merit of leaving what happened between them in doubt.

Next comes the viewpoint. Rarely is a good argument advanced in favor of the shifting viewpoint. It may be excusable in some stories, but it is a makeshift which has a tendency to be weakening. It means that the author-general is dividing his forces. Concentrate—focus the reader's interest from first to last on the incident as viewed from the angle of a single dominant character—usually the one chiefly concerned in the climax.

Then there is the time element. Have you developed your story by a series of new starts such as: The next day he—One morning she—A month later they—Next time he motored to town—and the like? If so, you have been sending out your forces in small battalions. An editor would term the story episodic. With each break in time, the reader must begin over and acquire interest in a new incident. Each juncture is a place of leakage. Plan your story so that there are the fewest possible lapses of time. For the average short-story, three fresh beginnings strain the limit. A story developed according to the outline for "A Matter of Preparedness" in our May issue would be effective in this respect, because the action would cover but a few hours, without definite break.

THE episodic story usually can be unified. Take as many as possible of the early incidents and weave them into one continuous happening. Then turn over to the conclusion and gather the last several scenes into an unbroken succession of incidents. "Bunch" the "in-between" incidents similarly, or use them for connecting material.

To illustrate: The story may depend on a succession of incidents such as this:

Thieves break into George's hencoop. The next day George goes to town and buys a gun. The following night he hears a noise in the hencoop and runs out, but the robbers have escaped. Three nights later, instead of going to bed, he lies in wait for them and springs out in time to make a capture.

Now the same succession of incidents may be worked into a continuous, instead of an episodic, narrative, the action covering a few hours with no pronounced lapses of time. Gathering them up so, we have the following:

George returns home late one evening after buying a gun. We learn by retrospect that thieves have been bothering his hencoop of late. Just as he is getting ready for bed, he hears a suspicious noise and hastens out. He finds no sign of the robbers, so goes back into the house; but instead of retiring, he slips out of the front door, around to the rear, and lies in wait. When the thieves return, he springs from concealment and captures them.

Unity of setting is closely allied to unity of time. Not only should the incidents be as nearly continuous as possible, but they should, generally speaking, occur without overmuch shifting from one place to another. A study of the drama will prove definitely helpful to the author who desires to obtain unity of composition, because the writer for the stage usually is compelled to concentrate all the action possible into three or four continuous scenes.

SOMETIMES diffusion is the result of making two or three crises out of what should form the material for a single climax. Take a typical form of detective story. The elements are: A crime has been committed, but the identity of the criminal is unknown. The detective-hero determines to effect a capture, and he is anxious to get ahead of a rival detective. This is a time-worn situation, but it will serve for illustration.

The elements of the problem are three: Who committed the crime? Will the criminal be captured? Which detective will effect the capture?

A threefold problem makes possible three different crises, which may be strung out one after another. In the first, the hero may discover the criminal's identity;

in the second, the rival detective may abandon the chase; in the third, the criminal may be captured by the hero.

But this is a foolish division of our forces. With the passing of the first crisis one element of suspense is lost; with the passing of the second, two-thirds of the suspense evaporates; only one element remains. The result of this disorganized attack on the reader's interest is the direct reverse of cumulative intensity.

It will be far better to combine the three for the most crushing attack possible. Let the rivalry between the detectives be keen up to the last minute, thus keeping the reader in doubt as to who, if either, is going to make the capture; and let the hero's final coup result simultaneously in the unmasking and the capture of the criminal.

In actual life, such a problem would be likely to resolve itself by degrees, as first outlined. But it is no distortion of life to combine the elements of the unfoldment so that they come out together and intensify each other. No matter how dramatic an event in real life may be, usually there is a possible combination of its elements—apparent to the artist's eye—which would have made its effect more telling.

This illustration has particular reference to the short-story. In long fiction it is necessary to have several successive crises; but each should be a concentration of all the suspense elements in the passage involved. Thus, if your aim is a crisis every two thousand words, try to save the elements for a "big bang" at the end of the two thousand, instead of distributing their force through the entire chapter.

Some stories owe their lack of unity to characters or incidents which are unnecessary. A closely knit story is one that has been reduced to its lowest possible terms. The best way to ascertain whether a thread of narrative is essential to the story is to outline a version in which it is omitted.

To illustrate by means of a simple example: Two friends, Fred and Al, fall in love with the same girl. Al, finding that she loves Fred, quarrels with him. Fred hesitates to ask the girl to marry him, because he is poor, while she is wealthy. Discovering this, she pretends to lose her money, whereat Fred proposes and is accepted. Al

comes to Fred after it is over, admits that the best man has won, and the friendship is renewed.

Now this outline, on examination, contains unnecessary incidents and an unnecessary character. Eliminate Al, and the real story remains; it is comprised in the sentences: "Fred hesitates to ask the girl to marry him, because he is poor, while she is wealthy. Discovering this, she pre-

tends to lose her money, whereat Fred proposes and is accepted." The climax concerns only these two, therefore they are the only characters needed. The relations of Al and Fred have nothing to do with the story.

Unity is nine-tenths of technique. The foregoing are but a few of the more important ways in which unity must enter into the construction of an effective story.



"Inside" Trade Paper Hints

BY EMILE C. SCHNURMACHER

Associate Editor, The American Hatter and The Millinery Trade Review



E. C. SCHNURMACHER

AS associate editor, I'm the chap who is chained to the re-write desk. After your manuscript has been read and accepted by the editor, it comes to me to be "whipped into shape." We have articles come into the office from correspondents and free lance writers

all over the country. Some of them are good, some fair and some are plain rotten. It is very rare indeed that an article passes by me without at least a sentence or so succumbing to the blue pencil. Here's the reason—a great many writers seem to forget that trade papers have simple though definite requirements. The writers who learn to take cognizance of these specifications are bound to get ahead in the great field offered by trade papers.

The primary element of salability in a trade-paper article is this: There must be either something of news interest in it or it must demonstrate a sound merchandising idea. Sounds simple, doesn't it? Yet we've

received some masterpieces of English diction expressing absolutely nothing in the most fluent way imaginable. On cutting out all of the non-essentials, there wasn't enough actual material left to make a two-inch "filler."

One thing that is intolerable to a trade paper editor is padding. This is a common fault with manuscripts we receive. It places the writer, no matter how good he may be otherwise, in a bad light, because it makes the editor feel that the writer is trying to "put one over on him." Use simple language and eliminate long, involved sentences. Articles for the majority of trade magazines do not of necessity have to be written in technical terms. It is one of the associate editor's functions to fix this up on the re-write. Let him do it. He is closer to the trade than you are and probably can make a better job of it than you can, especially if you are writing articles for many trade papers covering widely different fields.

If you are writing about a store, an individual, or a concern, eliminate all glowing phrases. They tend to give an article a "publicity blurb" flavor. Bear this in mind also if you are writing your impressions of merchandise; exercise a certain amount of restraint in describing their virtues. An editor will not publish a trade article that makes his publication appear to be a "puff sheet."

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TRADI
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HERE is one point that may be rather a shock to young writers who write as much for the sheer joy of writing as they do for the check that rewards their efforts. As our editor, Mr. E. F. Hubbard, says: "The reader's attitude must be considered. The newspaper reader goes through his paper eager for news. The trade magazine reader, on the other hand, is very often fed up with reading matter. He is not the studious type that likes reading for its own sake and he would, as a rule, rather be reading *The Saturday Evening Post*. He approaches a trade magazine with a sense of duty. He feels that it is likely to be heavy, stodgy stuff, which he should read for the good of his business, but which is going to be neither entertaining nor interesting. Many experienced trade-paper editors are frank to admit that this is the case. The recipe for overcoming this reader resistance is simple. Do not be too serious. Make the article as light and sparkling as possible. It is not necessary to indulge in slapstick, but make it palatable. We in the editorial office can do much to help in this regard. An alluring head, supported by an interesting sub-head, will capture the reader's attention, but it is up to you to fulfill the promise of that introduction in the article itself.

Send in illustrations. It is an infallible rule in our office, as well as many other trade paper editorial offices, that either an illustration or a box must appear on every page. This has a great deal to do with the lively appearance of a publication. If it is possible for you to obtain a photograph to accompany your article, then by all means do so. If this is not possible, perhaps you can obtain a line drawing or an advertisement bearing on the subject about which you have written. If the article is of a statistical nature, you may illustrate it yourself with simply executed diagrams or graphs. It requires no artistic technique to illustrate a floor plan or a comparison of figures in this manner. Incidentally, it might be mentioned that trade editors love figures. Quote them whenever possible. Figures have a note of authenticity and imply research and knowledge of the subject on your part.

TRADE magazine writing, to a great extent, is editorial writing, since nearly

all news, feature stories, editorials, and so on, are in some degree propaganda, using the word in its broadest and most innocent sense. It follows, therefore, that you should familiarize yourself with the policies of the publication for which you intend writing. To violate these principles is to court certain rejection. As an example of this, I might state that *The American Hatter* strongly upholds the dignity of the hat trade. Its position requires it to be the counsellor of experts who have a right to be intolerant of any inaccuracy or loose talk in their self-appointed leader. At the close of the straw-hat season this year, we received a very well-written article by a freelance writer who humorously described methods of breaking up straw hats. If that writer had been the least familiar with our editorial policy, that article would never have been submitted to us.

Members of the editorial staff of a trade publication, as a rule, are extremely human. They encourage young writers, because they themselves are writers. As the trade publication generally comes out semi-monthly or monthly, the editors do not get the thrill of newspaper work nor the satisfaction of fiction magazines. Consequently you will find that a great many members of trade-paper editorial staffs devote at least a few hours a week to outside writing. They, too, receive rejection slips and are sympathetic toward young writers who try to sell manuscripts to their publications. We use no rejection slips in our office. If an article is found to be unavailable, a personal letter is sent to the author, explaining wherein the article has fallen down and in a great many cases offering constructive criticism.

Summarizing, I would say that the essentials of successful trade paper writing are these:

1. Be sure your article has news value or a definite merchandising idea.
2. Be wary of publicity blurbs and cautious of glowing adjectives.
3. Send in illustrations.
4. Quote figures wherever possible.
5. Familiarize yourself with the policies of the publication.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S

LITERARY MARKET TIPS

GATHERED MONTHLY FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

The Eagle Magazine, South Bend, Ind., official publication of the Fraternal Order of Eagles, "is now in the market for feature articles of from 1500 to 3000 words. These stories should be of interest to women as well as men; should be dramatically—that is, vividly—presented; and should be told in a spritely, entertaining manner. Payment will be made on acceptance at the rates of 1½ and 2 cents a word," writes Frank E. Hering, managing editor, who adds: "I am desirous of getting in touch with free-lance writers who can contribute regularly."

College Humor, 1050 N. La Salle Street, Chicago, "is very much interested in the work of all young poets," writes H. N. Swanson, editor. "We favor lengths up to fourteen lines, but we buy almost all of the various forms. Satire and love themes are favored. An attempt is always made to bring the poet's personality before the readers and to exploit him as well as our fiction writers."

The American Parade, 166 Remson Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., a quarterly magazine in book form, informs contributors that payment for material is made on a royalty basis. A fixed proportion of the profits of each issue is divided among them.

American Legion Monthly, Indianapolis, Ind., informs a contributor that its verse demands are quite restricted, and ordinarily such material will be accepted only from nationally known writers. "About the only verse we will use will be quite pretentious compositions to take a full page with decorations," states Philip Von Blon, managing editor.

The Woman's Viewpoint, 110 W. Forty-second Street, New York, a monthly, is edited by Miss Florence M. Sterling, who states that personality sketches of achievement, short-stories, novelettes, verse and short miscellany are desired, with special emphasis upon out-of-door material. Indefinite rates, "dependent on value of material," are paid on publication. The magazine recently moved from Houston, Tex., to New York City. It is devoted to women's interests, national and international.

Fighting Romances, *Muscle Builder*, *Sportlife*, and *Pictures*, of the Macfadden group of magazines, have been discontinued.

Popular Educator and *Primary Education*, 50 Bromfield Street, Boston, have been combined under the name of the former.

People's Home Journal, 80 Lafayette Street, New York, Kenneth W. Payne, editor, Mary B. Charlton, fiction editor, states that it is not its policy to play up "stars" among its fiction writers. "Many of our most appreciated stories have come from unknown authors who had one burning tale to tell—one tale so true, so vitally rooted in common experience, so inspiring in its theme, that no one could fail to find life brighter after reading it. Because our stories are of this kind, coming from the writing public at large, from unknown and well-known authors alike, they encompass a more widely varied range of plot, setting, theme, and situation than might be possible if we confined ourselves to the work of a limited number of 'big names.' *People's Home Journal* fiction characteristically limited only in the requirement of wholesomeness, has long been openly praised by our readers because they say it is more varied, less stereotyped, less written-to-formula, than the fiction found in many periodicals."

How to Sell, Mount Morris, Ill., "is in the market for especially interesting photographs and very brief material to accompany them, especially for legend purposes, giving unusual glimpses along selling lines," writes C. S. Spalding, editor. "*How to Sell* is devoted especially to selling direct to the user or consumer through sales persons on commission. We would therefore be glad to carry more pictorial features, playing up the odd, or unusual, or picturesque aspects of selling in this country and Canada, as well as across the water. Peddlers, close-ups of concessionaires at circuses, fairs, etc., bartering with natives, scenes at open-air markets, or in front of oriental booths, and the like, would be considered with interest. Payment will be at rates ranging from \$1.60 to \$3.00, depending upon the relative interest of the photograph in our judgment."

Arts, Fads, Modes, 925 Market Street, Wilmington, Del., is a magazine appearing twice monthly "which does not buy manuscripts, but publishes material along the lines of short fiction, art, drama, verse, etc., from amateurs who want to break into print. You might announce this for the benefit of novices," writes the editor, M. A. Roberts.

Baker's Weekly, 45 W. Forty-fifth Street, New York, uses articles on the baking industry, both cracker and bread, etc., for which it pays on publication at 30 cents per inch.

Southern Trade Press Service, P. O. Box 1671, Atlanta, Ga., Harold F. Podhaski, editor, writes: "As a result of our recent notice we received a number of manuscripts, but comparatively few that we were able to accept. The principal fault we have to find is that the stories sent us were mostly of a theoretical nature, whereas we are looking for articles containing specific information. We would suggest that the writer place himself in the shoes of the dealer, as it were, and write an article that another dealer will find of value to his own business. We are especially desirous of securing stories on the collection of accounts by retailers, wholesalers or manufacturers, or on direct mail advertising. Other subjects desired include window displays with photos, interior store displays, or articles on any subject of a retail or wholesale merchandising nature. Payment is made on acceptance at good rates."

Psychology, 17 W. Sixtieth Street, New York, uses health, inspirational, popular-scientific, business-success and similar articles, preferably around 3000 words in length, for which it pays 1 cent a word shortly after publication. It uses short-stories, an occasional poem, but emphasizes articles dealing with applied psychology. Henry Knight Miller is editor.

The Standard Bible Teacher, Standard Publishing Company, Box 5, Station N, Cincinnati, Ohio, is reported by Edwin R. Errett, editor-in-chief, lesson literature, to be open for manuscripts. "This is a magazine for teachers of adult Bible classes, published quarterly. It uses a few articles of 1500 to 2000 words concerning Bible study, adult class work, travel in the lands of the Bible, Biblical archeology, etc. We can pay about 1/2 cent a word on acceptance."

The Ozark News and Feature Service, 216 Milligan Building, Springfield, Mo., apparently syndicates only material prepared by the editor, James T. Richmond. Mr. Richmond writes that he plans to launch a monthly magazine, *Twilight Ted's Trumpet*, using short-stories, articles and poems, for which payment will be at very modest rates at first.

Farm and Fireside, 250 Park Avenue, New York, informs a contributor that it is not a market for brief humor or verse, all its needs in that line being supplied by a member of the staff.

Children, 353 Fourth Avenue, New York, prefers stories to be under 3000 words, according to a statement to a contributor.

The Nation's Health, 22 E. Ontario Street, Chicago, purchases only material written on special assignment, and its rates of payment are very low, writes F. L. Rector, M. D., editor.

The Weekly Kansas City Star, Kansas City, Mo., uses short and long articles on farming and gardening, also "how to make" farm appliances accompanied by rough pencil sketches.

National Grocer, 208 La Salle Street, Chicago, "is in the market for stories 500 to 750 words in length, of successful retail grocers in cities of under 100,000. Stories should be accompanied by photographs of stores or grocerymen, or both. Payment is made at \$3.50 per thousand words the twentieth of the month of publication.

Motor Age, 5 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, is a weekly magazine edited by Sam Shelton in the interests of the retail automotive trade. Material is usually supplied by the staff and special correspondents but occasional articles are purchased, for which payment is made on publication.

Printing, 41 Park Row, New York, "is in need of non-technical, human-interest articles of 500 to 2000 words on the printing trade from the standpoint of the employer," states the editor, Walter McCain. "We pay on publication for material at from 27 cents a column inch up."

Wharton-Derr Productions Company, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, which ambiguously advertises for "Plays—Vaudeville Sketches—Monologues," responds to manuscripts with advertising matter, revealing that a reading fee is required for considering material.

Western Radio Trades, 503 Spring Arcade Building, Los Angeles, Calif., "uses articles on dealer methods of 500 to 1000 words and short miscellany of 100 to 500 words," writes the editor, R. Randall Irwin. "Our general need is for articles on sound methods of making money selling and servicing radio. This magazine is designed to cover eleven Western states. Payment is 1 cent a word on publication."

The Druggist Circular, 12 Gold Street, New York, Clyde L. Eddy, editor, uses success articles about retail druggists in which merchandising methods are given. Payment is made on publication, but rates are not at hand.

Bank Man, 162 W. Monroe Street, Chicago, Joseph J. Schroeder, editor, does not use unsolicited material.

College Comics, 152 W. Forty-second Street, New York, through Wayne G. Haisley, managing editor, recently informed a contributor: "I believe we could use more of your material if I didn't have to ponder such notations on the manuscripts as 'Book rights reserved,' etc. I am so busy with other matters that I can't possibly post myself on what this means, and whether it conflicts with our needs."

Better Flowers, North Portland, Ore., is not in the market for material.

The Sporting Goods Buyer, Columbus, Ohio, has been discontinued.

The Spice Box, Rockland, Mass., informs a contributor that it will accept material only from subscribers.

THE S. T. C. NEWS

A Page of Comment and Gossip About the
Simplified Training Course and Fiction
Writing Topics in General

VOL. III, No. 8

AUGUST, 1926

EDITED BY DAVID RAFFELLOCH

COLONY SUCCESSFUL

First Annual Summer School at Indian Hills Completes Session

Writers from many parts of the United States attended The Author & Journalist's first writers' colony and summer school. Lectures were given by prominent authors every Monday and Saturday and classes were held on other days under the direction of David Raffeloch, director of the Simplified Training Course.

The success of the first annual summer colony revealed the interest and the demand for such a colony school. Writers from large cities as well as small towns are given an opportunity to associate with other writers, to discuss their problems and receive the encouragement that comes from being with others interested in the same art. Lectures were informal; students were given the opportunity of asking questions of the speakers and of conversing with them. Editors of practically all the fiction magazines wrote letters addressed to the students, telling what, in their opinions, are the requirements of good fiction, and giving the immediate market requirements of their magazines.

Besides the lectures and class work, colony students enjoyed many trips and parties. One especially interesting trip was to the old famous mining towns, Idaho Springs, Georgetown and Silver Plume. At the last named place the students were taken through a gold mine that is being actively worked.

The Towa Pueblo Indians at Indian Hills furnished a great deal of entertainment for the students. They performed their native dances and ceremonies and displayed their handiwork in beads, leather and pottery. Trips also were taken to the Castle, Evergreen, Echo Lake, Tiny Town and Red Rocks Park.

Next year The Author & Journalist's writers' colony and summer school will be even better equipped to furnish a glorious vacation and intensive, practical training to writers. The colony will open July 1 and continue through July and August. Each student will have a private room with electric lights and modern conveniences. The rooms will be handsomely furnished and rates will continue to be reasonable. More detailed plans will be announced later on.

He that takes up conclusions on the trust of authors, and doth not fetch them from the first items in every reckoning, which are the significations of names settled by definitions, loses his labour and does not know anything, but only believeth.—Hobbes.

Write something great.—Mar-tial.

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A Few Words of Gossip With the Editor

Student-writers sometimes come to me and ask if the correspondence method of instruction is better than residence instruction. This is not a question that can easily be answered off-hand, because each method has its advantages and a great deal depends upon the individual as to which type of instruction is most satisfactory.

Much is to be said for the correspondence method, however. When conducted intelligently it is, perhaps, the most successful of all methods. Instead of listening to lectures, students are required to study and understand lessons on phases of the craft, and then to demonstrate that they have learned by applying the instruction in given assignments.

In residence instruction criticisms are mostly oral; they may be forgotten or remembered imperfectly. In correspondence work every assignment receives a written criticism that serves as an imperishable record, one that may be referred to at any time and studied at leisure.

In The Author & Journalist's training course, students are given the privilege of asking questions and are urged to take advantage of this privilege. In class, some find it embarrassing to ask questions, especially if a few members of the class are more advanced than others. Also it is sometimes difficult to remember problems that bothered one while writing and the opportunity to ask the question in class may pass or never come up. But correspondence students may write their questions at any time and as fully as they choose. They need feel no embarrassment at asking the simplest question or at repeating any question until the matter is fully cleared up in their minds.

Correspondence students may progress as rapidly or slowly in their work as their time or aptitude for learning permits. They are neither speeded nor held back by others.

When correspondence work offers actual training in writing and not mere "instruction" or study, then its advantages over the residence method are many. I never hesitate to recommend the correspondence system of short-story training, for I have frequently seen its superiority demonstrated; have seen it help student-writers to success after years of class work had failed entirely to develop ability. The ideal way, it seems to me, is to take correspondence training and supplement it when opportunity permits, by residence instruction, in order to secure the lively stimulation of contact with other writers.

A GOOD SOLUTION

S. T. C. Helps Many Writers to Overcome Their Difficulties

A writer who has sold a good deal of work, but who experienced long periods of unproductive effort, turned recently to the Simplified Training Course for help. At some times he is able to work out many plots and turn them into complete, salable stories. Then comes a period when his muse deserts him entirely and he is unable to work out a single affective plot.

This writer's problem is not an uncommon one. Some authors seem to "write themselves out" for a period and thus they are afraid to give up other employment and depend entirely upon their writing for their income. The problem is not insurmountable. It has been demonstrated time and again that the muse can be harnessed and made to respond to the urge of the writer.

One way to do this is to set aside a certain time for writing, and religiously use that time for nothing else than for working out plots, writing stories or revising work. The writer who would make a living from his writing must train himself to work at creating stories as one holds himself to any job.

Having set aside several hours for writing, the author must have the material from which to write his stories, must have the stimulation and encouragement to put his best into each story. Many writers have found that the Simplified Training Course furnished the stimulus and intelligent guidance they need. It is for this reason that more experienced writers are enrolled in the S. T. C. than in any other course in fictional training.

The Simplified Training Course is of great practical value to the beginner as well as to the author who has achieved some success. The training is intelligent, flexible enough to meet the individual student's requirements and thoroughly personal.

NOTES OF INTEREST TO WRITERS

Aldous Huxley recently returned to his home in England after a visit to the United States.

Twelve new books of history, one of sport, 52 novels, 18 volumes of biography, five of drama and 15 of poetry appeared last month, the International Book Review announces.

Al Woods, theatrical manager, says that plays should be judged by a play commission before they are produced, rather than afterwards. He says it takes over \$60,000 to produce a play and sometimes the production is censored before it has had a chance to pay out.

American Childhood, 120 E. Sixteenth Street, New York, Carolyn S. Bailey, editor, writes: "It would better for prospective contributors to correspond with us directly in relation to our literary needs, as our demands are specialized."

Frolics, Floral Park, N. Y., R. O. Smith, editor, writes: "We pay on publication (rates not stated) for humorous articles of 250 to 1000 words, short-stories of 2500 words, humorous and love themes, and jokes, skits and anecdotes. No verse or long material desired."

Laughs and Chuckles, Wilmington, Del., does not report on submitted material or reply to letters of inquiry, according to several contributors.

Railway Review, 307 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, a weekly devoted to technical railroad operation subjects and catering to the executive, pays for acceptable material on publication at about 30 cents an inch. *Railway Review-Monthly Extension Issue*, published by the same firm, is addressed to railroad employees. According to a contributor, it pays for material about fifteen days after publication at about $\frac{3}{4}$ cent a word. In addition, it gives a \$60 gold watch each month as a prize for the best feature article.

Railroad Herald, 598 W. Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Ga., a railroad paper of the South, pays rates in excess of 1 cent a word for feature material, according to a contributor.

Railway Life, Rochester, N. Y., organ of the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad, occasionally purchases railroad feature articles, paying about $\frac{1}{2}$ cent a word on acceptance.

Among railroad magazines presumably paying for contributed material are the following: *The Baltimore and Ohio Magazine*, Mount Royal Station, Baltimore, Md., a monthly using feature articles and short fiction of railroad interest. *The Great Western Magazine*, 1139 Peoples Gas Building, Chicago, a monthly publishing fiction and feature articles. *Norfolk & Western Magazine*, Roanoke, Va., a monthly using railroad miscellany.

The National Men's Wear Salesman, Michigan-Ohio Building, Chicago, a magazine that circulates exclusively among employees of men's clothing and furnishing stores, according to F. P. Feerick, associate editor, is in need of stories and articles up to 1500 words in length that tell of individual accomplishments in this field, that are constructive in the sense that they would improve standards of retail salesmanship and personal efficiency, or that make for a better understanding of merchandise. Ingenious methods of increasing individual sales are especially desirable. Rates: from $\frac{1}{2}$ cent to 2 cents a word, payable upon acceptance, and within five days from receipt of manuscript. The publishers are Men's Wear Service Corporation.

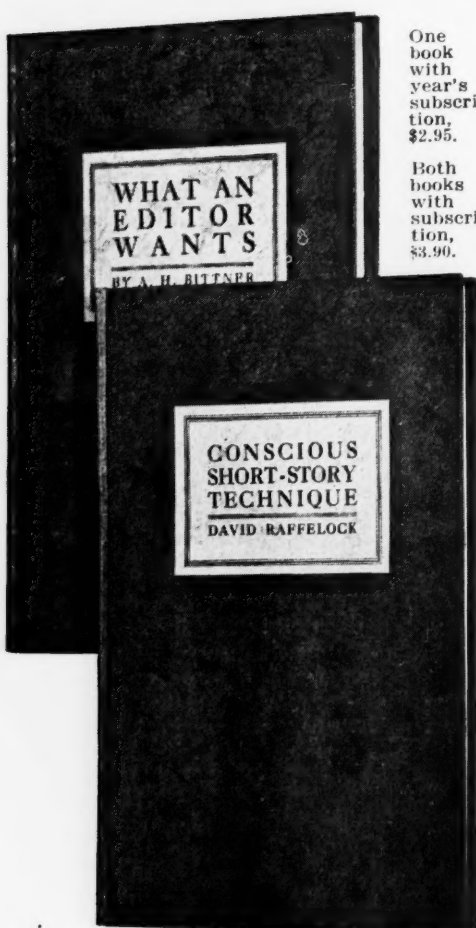
A contributor writes: "For the information of writers generally, I have to advise that on April 26th I sent a manuscript to the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. Today I received this manuscript back from the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, New York City, with a letter reading as follows: 'In view of the many unjustified claims of plagiarism that have recently been made against motion-picture producers, we have instituted an iron-clad rule in our organization that we will refuse to consider any unsolicited manuscripts. We are, therefore, returning your manuscript herewith, unread by us. Signed, Editorial Department Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, per E. Caldwell.' I haven't for some time submitted any stories to photoplay producers. It is, therefore, obvious that the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* has some direct connection with the photoplay company that returned the manuscript."

Canzanova, Jr.'s, Tales, Two Worlds Publishing Co., Suite 405-8, 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Francis Page, editor, is a new quarterly book for subscribers (limited to 1000, at \$5 per issue, \$15 a year) to be issued the first of April, July, October and January, each issue to contain (among other material) at least one complete "distinguished" novel.

The Gammadion, Lock Box 624, Birmingham, Ala. (quarterly) announces that its prize offers closed with the summer issue. "We are beginning our second year," writes Jack Nelson, editor, "by paying for material promptly on acceptance. Our literary requirements are high."

Poultry Tribune, Mt. Morris, Ill., is in the market for articles of from 1500 to 2000 words based on experiences with poultry, and short miscellany on allied subjects. Manuscripts are examined by Charles Webster, associate editor, and payment is made on acceptance at \$10 to \$15 each for general articles and approximately 1 cent a word for other matter.

Tile Talk, 507-511 W. Thirty-third Street, New York, is a new trade journal published in the interest of tile dealers, manufacturers, contractors and setters. It is in the market for articles of from 800 to 1000 words. The editors write: "Of course, articles of general interest to tile people, or the use of tile in the home and elsewhere, are of first consideration, but articles of general interest to the business man are also desired. A writer need not be familiar with the tile business to write acceptable articles. For instance, he might see a building in course of construction, or one already constructed, where tile is used, and from that build an interesting article. *Tile Talk* is incorporated as a subsidiary to the J. B. Owens Investment Co., Inc., and is financially responsible. At present we will pay at the rate of 1 cent a word on acceptance for suitable articles of the length named."



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It leads the way to clear thinking in order that the reader himself may be able to choose the best development for his story.

"'Conscious Short-Story Technique' is a triumph, for you have succeeded in that most difficult thing: writing about technical matters sanely, helpfully, inspiringly, without losing yourself in generalities."—G. G. Clark, author and instructor in short-story writing.

"Mr. Raffelock approaches an exposition of short-story mechanics from the standpoint of awareness, and thereby has succeeded in presenting the fundamentals of the business with an extraordinary clearness and vividness. We hazard the opinion that this unpretentious volume will yet prove to have been the pioneer in a new method of teaching short-story writing."—T. C. O'Donnell, author and editor.

WHAT AN EDITOR WANTS. Postpaid, \$1.10

By A. H. Bittner, Associate Editor, The Frontier.

So full of practical help that it deserves a place on the bookshelf of everyone who aspires to write fiction. Plot is treated from a new angle. One of the unique and practical features is the building

up of a plot from original germinal idea to complete short-story. It makes clear the considerations which govern an editor's choice of fiction.

"Bittner does not pretend to possess any mysterious secret . . . but he does possess a knowledge of what is and what is not a story, and this knowledge he imparts to his readers in a straightforward manner which renders his book one of the most practical and instructive manuals on short-story writing that I have ever read."—H. R. Ellingson, in *Colorado Springs Gazette*.

"Bittner makes clear so many things that were a puzzle for me until I worked them out by dint of much experience, particularly in the chapters on 'The Story Is the Thing' and 'Action.' They're worth their weight in gold."—Merlin Moore Taylor, author and editor.

Other Recommendations, and Prices Postpaid

Fundamentals of Fiction Writing, Arthur Sullivant Hoffman. \$2.15.

Fiction Writers On Fiction Writing, Hoffman. \$2.65.

The Business of Writing, Holliday and Van Rensselaer. \$2.15.

Plotting the Short-Story, Culpepper Chunn. \$1.10.

The 36 Dramatic Situations, Polti. \$1.65.

Writing to Sell, Edwin Wildman. \$2.15.

COMBINATION OFFERS: A year's subscription to THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST with any of these books, \$1.85 plus cost of books; subscription with two books, \$1.70 plus cost of books; subscription with three or more books, \$1.55 plus cost of books.

The Author & Journalist

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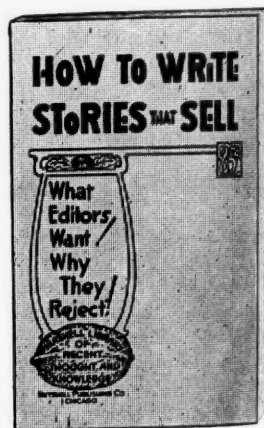
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How to Write Stories That Sell

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Credit Monthly, 1 Park Avenue, New York, is in the market for commercial and banking credit articles, and a few articles relating to wholesale credits. Payment is made on acceptance at about 1½ cents a word. Rodman Gilder is editor.

Lumber Manufacturer & Dealer, 4908 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis, Mo., Ralph T. McQuinn, editor, writes: "We need articles of 500 to 1500 words giving dealer helps and novel developments, and news items of the lumber industry. Payment is made 30 days after publication at 20 cents an inch for news and 30 cents for dealer helps and features."

The Vermonter, White River Junction, Vt., does not pay for material except by copies and subscriptions. Charles R. Cummings, editor, states: "We use articles pertaining to Vermont only or with a Vermont string tied to them. Ours is a magazine of state interests and we can use nothing over 5000 words. Material from Vermonters away from their native state or people who have visited Vermont is solicited, including articles, short-stories, verse and anecdotes."

The Junior League Bulletin, 133 E. Sixty-first Street, New York, published monthly, except July, August and September, by the Association of Junior Leagues of America, Inc., offers monthly cash prizes to Junior League members only for book reviews, answers to questionnaires, essays, etc., as outlined in its publication, which also prints staff dramatic and art criticism. An occasional light essay is apparently contributed. Mrs. Charles A. Lindley is editor, Miss Maud T. Gould, managing editor.

Boston Ideas has moved from 603 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, to 40 Boylston Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Christian Work, a religious weekly publication, was merged with *The Christian Century* of Chicago, beginning with the April issue.

The Independent Agent and Salesman, 22 E. Twelfth Street, Cincinnati, O., reports that it is somewhat overstocked. Ordinarily it is in need of 100- to 2500-word articles on direct-to-consumer selling. This magazine also uses one or two semi-fiction direct-salesman tales in each issue, a few editorials of 50 to 250 words and several poems of 8 to 24 lines.

Nebraska Farmer, Lincoln, Neb., writes that it will not be in the market for material until it has partly used up the surplus on hand.

Paris Nights and Laughter, 584 Drexel Building, Philadelphia, now use much reprint material from British publications, thus lessening the amount of original matter purchased.

Police Magazine, New York, has been discontinued.

Smiles and Giggles, Newark, N. J., has been suspended.

The Farmers' Dispatch, St. Paul, Minn., writes that the publication has been cut down to eight pages and cannot use any contributed material.

Architecture, 597 Fifth Avenue, New York, does not use unsolicited material.

Radio Digest, 510 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, reports that it does not pay for humor.

Our Dumb Animals, 180 Longwood Avenue, Boston, Guy Richardson, editor, "uses material illustrating kindness to animals, importance of humane education, and unusual anecdotes relating thereto. Essays and articles should not be over 800 words; short-stories not over 1000 words; verse 16 to 20 lines; short miscellany of 100 words or less is used, and specially, anecdotes of well-known persons. "Ours is not a juvenile magazine," writes the editor, "though we have one page devoted to children, and many young people read the magazine. Articles should appeal to young and old alike. Mere histories of pets that seem unusual to the owner are not wanted. We always pay on acceptance at ½ cent a word for prose and \$1 to \$2 for verse."

The Fourth Estate has moved its editorial offices to 25 W. Forty-third Street, New York.

Time, 236 E. Thirty-ninth Street, New York, a publication of comment and review, advises: "Unfortunately, we have no room in *Time* for independent articles, no matter how good they are." This statement, on the part of the foreign editor T. J. C. Martyn, would indicate that the magazine is prepared by the staff exclusively.

Bobbs-Merrill Co., general book publishers, 18 University Square, Indianapolis, Ind., D. L. Chambers, editor, states: "New authors are welcomed. Careful readings are accorded all matter submitted."

The El Paso Herald, El Paso, Tex., a contributor reports, is paying for special articles—features pertaining to the life of the Southwest, especially what may be used for the Sunday section, at about ¼ cent a word.

Scientific Book Corporation is the new name of the U. P. C. Book Company, 239 W. Thirty-ninth Street, New York. This corporation has also absorbed the David Williams Company. It publishes trade and technical books.

Wallace's Farmer, Des Moines, Iowa, uses agricultural items and articles, juvenile stories of 3000 words, and special articles with pictures, especially if they refer in any way to "odd and queer farms," such as buffalo or wolf farms. Payment is on acceptance at 1 cent a word, \$1.50 each for photos.

Reliable Poultry Journal, Dayton, Ohio, Grant M. Curtis, editor, writes that it is overstocked.

New Sensations Magazine is reported to have ceased publication.

(Continued on Page 29)

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Beau, 50 Church Street, New York, is a projected illustrated monthly magazine for men edited by Roger St. Clair, to appear in September. It will be devoted to men who are interested in "the niceties of living," and expects to use brief humorous articles, short-stories, and light verse. It describes itself as "epicurean and sophisticated." Payment will be at indefinite rates on publication.

Henry Holt & Co., book publishers, will move from 19 W. Forty-fourth Street, N. Y., to 1 Park Avenue, N. Y., on the completion of a building at that address and the expiration of the lease at their present location.

The American Magazine, 250 Park Avenue, New York, invites contributions within 1200 words for its department, "The Family's Money," in which family financial problems are discussed.

Sunset Magazine has moved from 460 Fourth Street to 1045 Sansome Street, San Francisco.

The Young Crusader, Evanston, Ill., buys short prose material suitable for a W. C. T. U. publication, paying fair rates on publication.



Prize Contests

College Comics announces a fiction contest ending October 1, 1926, with prizes of \$250, \$150, and \$100, plus its regular rates, for the best three stories accepted, reserving right to purchase at its regular rates non-prizewinners submitted and to hold all rights on all stories purchased, including prizewinners. Duplicate awards will be made in case of ties. Short-stories should be at least 5000 words, novels at least 50,000 words. Stories having scholastic or collegiate treatment preferred, but not required. The best, most animated stories of youth, romance and love are desired. Contributors may submit any number of stories. All submissions should be addressed to "Fiction Editor" at the Chicago editorial office, 221 E. 20th Street. If entrant is a student, state name of school, college or university and class year. Entries must be forwarded prepaid. Sufficient stamps with a self-addressed envelope must be enclosed for returning manuscripts. Winners will be announced November 21, 1926.

The Tribune, Chicago, invites contributions to an illustrated humorous page, as follows: "Jokes or short humorous poems are desired. Contributions must be original and hitherto unpublished. Material that we accept will be paid for, but unacceptable manuscripts or drawings cannot be returned. Please don't send postage for that purpose. Address Arty-Chuckles, *The eTribune*, Chicago."

The Denver Post, Denver, Colo., each week offers prizes of \$10, \$5, and five of \$1 for the best editorials accepted for publication in its Sunday "The Open Range" page.

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Collier's, the National Weekly, 250 Park Avenue, New York, pays \$10 each for "Ruthless Rhymes" of four lines each. None are returned. Each rhyme consists of a humorous treatment of some harrowing subject.

The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, Ohio, invites readers to write for it "a story about your home town." What was the most interesting thing about your home town? What made it different from other towns? For the best "home town" story submitted *The Plain Dealer* will pay \$10; for the second best, \$5. Your story must not exceed 500 words in length and should be addressed to the Sunday and Feature editor. No time limit is mentioned.

The United States Rubber Company, Room 404, 1790 Broadway, New York, announces prizes of \$100, \$75, \$50, and \$25, with \$5 prizes for honorable mention, in a contest open to shoe dealers and repairers, telling how Uskid Soles and other "U. S." sole and heel products have helped them to win and hold customers. Closing date October 15, 1926.

Sunset, 460 Fourth Street, San Francisco, announces that it will conduct another Western Homes Design prize contest next year.

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